



Mishawaka Communicator



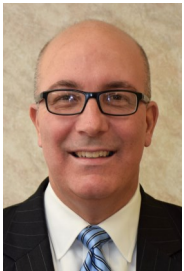
Working together to build the "Best Hometown in America" by delivering exceptional services, promoting safe and clean neighborhoods, elevating the quality of life and inspiring pride in our community.

Dave Wood, Mayor

www.mishawaka.in.gov

August 2020

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood



My annual State of the City address is typically a massive undertaking. I affectionately refer to it as my annual term paper. Many staff-hours go into developing the annual department reports, executive summary and coming attractions that I typically deliver at the Battell Community Center every March. Not only is it an opportunity to address our Common Council and public about City initiatives, but it is also required by State law and City ordinance that I give an update on the fiscal condition of the City to the Council. This year marks my 10th and the City's 119th State of the City. Unfortunately, I was not able to give the 2020 State of the City in a traditional way due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtually all of the document was written before the shelter in place order and before any significant impact of the pandemic. While the State of the City has changed dramatically since the report was written, I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you the historical document and the status of our City at the end of February 2020.

The theme for 2020 is "**Focused on the Fundamentals**" because Mishawaka's success is not just inspired by any one event or statistic, but rather the continued focus on fundamentals over time that illustrates the work and efforts of our businesses, citizens and employees who continue to make Mishawaka a better place to live. As an old basketball coach, I guess it is easiest for me to compare this to a basketball team working on dribbling, passing, shooting and defensive drills.

These activities are not attention grabbing but they are fundamental to the success of a team. Like a basketball team, our success on the court year after year is illustrated through the outcomes associated with our continued practice, dedication, discipline and steady leadership of our many departments.

Mishawaka Police Department — Public safety is public service number one! There is no better expression of focusing on the fundamentals in local government than the community policing work performed by the Mishawaka Police Department. Mishawaka's proactive approach to police work continues to keep the City of Mishawaka a safe place to live. I am happy to report that the overall crime rate dropped 8% between 2018 and 2019. I am also please to report that Larceny-Theft represented the biggest drop with an 18% decrease and a 17% decrease in robberies, from 41 to 24. Illustrating fundamentally good police work, the Detectives assigned to robbery cases also solved 52% of these cases. The national average for robbery clearance rates is only 25% to 30% for cities. Violent crimes are down as well and there have been no homicides in Mishawaka since 2018.

Mishawaka Fire Department — A fundamental service provided by any City is responding to the public in times of crisis. The Mishawaka Fire Department continues to focus on providing exemplary service. Statistically, the department had another record setting year as the Department responded to 8,330 calls for service. This is 321 more calls than we received in 2018. The greatest number of calls continue to be for emergency medical services (EMS). The EMS response was up 4% in 2019. The MFD had only 154 calls that involved a commercial, residential, apartment or other type of fire; down 2.5%. The remaining calls for service included any requests by the public involving investigations, gas leaks, citizen assists, and a variety of other types of responses.

City Finances — Focusing on the fundamentals associated with the management of finances very simply represents the difference between cities that are thriving and struggling. To thrive as a City requires that we have adequate funding and that the money is managed wisely. In 2019, Mishawaka passed another balanced budget for 2020 that provides investment in public safety, streets and parks while including well deserved raises for our employees. Budgets are about making choices and setting priorities. Mishawaka's success continues to be based on being fiscally conservative and not incurring long-term legacy costs that could jeopardize our stability in times of uncertainty such as what we find ourselves in now with the pandemic.

Central Services — One illustration of how focused a community is on its fundamentals is how it cares for streets and other public property. It is the responsibility of the Central Services Department to maintain all green areas of city-owned properties, consisting of nearly 700 acres. They also maintain 330 lane miles of roadway. During the winter months, in addition to the streets, they remove nearly 19 miles of snow on all city-owned sidewalks. Some notable statistics include: street sweeping is completed nine months out of the year. A complete cycle is made throughout the city every 9-11 days, and in 2019 we removed 5,819 cubic yards of debris from city streets. Leaf pick-up is completed throughout the whole city up to seven times over the course of a year. During the 2019 season, we removed 11,550 cubic yards of leaves from residential homes. The traffic department completed 1,605 tasks in 2019, more than 466 than were completed in 2018—sign repairs, new installations, inspections, field data collection, manufacturing of signs and pavement markings applied to roads. Fleet maintenance recorded 1,110 repairs, used 194 thousand gallons of unleaded gas and 96 thousand gallons of diesel fuel.

Construction — The bottom line is construction is a fundamental element to any city. Although construction goes up and down with the economy, the outcome of focusing on the fundamentals is steady long-term growth and development.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sep 7 City Offices Closed

ONLINE ACCESS



<http://mishawaka.in.gov>



<http://facebook.com/cityofmishawaka>



<http://mishawaka.in.gov/communicator>



<http://mishawaka.in.gov/parksandrecreation>



<https://twitter.com/MishawakaMayor>



<https://instagram.com/MishawakaMayor/>

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood *(continued)*

Construction needs to be not just in the form of new buildings and uses, but to be truly successful, we also need to have continued reinvestment in older areas and buildings. I am pleased to report that Mishawaka continues to have this combination of investment and remains a thriving community. In 2019, permits were issued for 58 new single-family homes. This is two more than issued in 2018. Commercial permits were issued with an estimated construction cost of 62.7 million dollars. By the numbers, nine new commercial building permits were pulled for new free-standing buildings in 2019 compared to 15 in 2018.

Parks and Recreation — Focusing on the fundamentals means elevating our quality of life by providing quality parks with a variety of recreational opportunities. Every day, the City of Mishawaka Parks Department provides opportunities and plays a vital role in enhancing the lives of the people living in our community. In 2019, the Parks Department held over 50 events compared to 36 events in 2018. In 2019, the City introduced the Mishawaka Farmers Market at Central Park on Sundays from 11am to 3pm. Ribbon cuttings were celebrated at four new amenities in 2019: Mary Gibbard Park, Central Park Stage, Mishawaka Education Foundation Community Greenhouse and Veterans Plaza at Battell Park.

Code Enforcement — Focused on the fundamentals means the City is staying on top of problem conditions and properties. Mishawaka has always been known for its clean and well-kept neighborhoods and neighborhood stability remains a top priority. Many neighborhoods in cities across our region continue to deteriorate while Mishawaka's neighborhoods continue to thrive. This can be attributed to the hard work, diligence, and dedication exhibited by the staff of Code Enforcement, and the great relationship Code maintains with homeowners, property managers and business in Mishawaka. Code opened over 4,000 cases in 2019. On these cases, Code Officers conducted over 16,000 follow-ups and brought into compliance 3,925 nuisance cases and 240 substandard cases.

Engineering — As a city, we have roads, sewer, water, storm water and a lot of other infrastructure, some of which is over 100 years old. Being focused on fundamentals means we must constantly maintain, improve, and add to the infrastructure. In 2019, projects under construction were funded with Long Term Control, Tax Increment Financing, Cumulative Sewer, Redevelopment CDBG, Local Road and Street, Sewer Maintenance, and INDOT/Federal Highway Funds. Construction completed in 2019 totaled approximately \$12.4 million. Some of the significant projects worked on in 2019:

- Douglas Road Phase II, including Veterans Parkway & Northeast Well Field utility access
- Fourth Street Improvements - Phase II
- Elmwood Avenue Realignment
- Twelfth Street, Phase II (Campbell Street to Downey Avenue)
- Ironworks Plaza Improvements
- Community Crossings Grant
- Summer Street Paving Program
- Alley Paving Program
- Curb and Sidewalk Program
- Lincolnway S.R. 933 Restriping

This summary only highlights a portion of the accomplishments and on-going efforts in our City. Being focused on the fundamentals means that the improvements to our City do not happen by accident. The City continues to constantly plan for future improvements. You can read about projects currently under design or being studied by accessing the entire State of the City report at <http://www.mishawaka.in.gov/soc2020>. I encourage everyone interested to read the full reports provided by each City Department for a more complete perspective.

Although I get the honor and privilege to share with you the collective works that make Mishawaka the "Best Hometown in America", it is the great people and the public servants that I get to work with each and every day that make this City thrive. It not only shows in the great service that they provide, but also in the manner in which they provide it. This is the level of government and these are services that are closest to the Mishawaka people and that is what makes service here so rewarding.

Personally, I want to thank all of Mishawaka for providing me the opportunity to continue to serve. I am humbled by the trust that has been placed in me. My service as Mayor continues to be the honor of my lifetime. I'm running out of ways to say it, but never doubt that I truly mean it. I love Mishawaka and look at its citizens as part of an extended family. I am also an eternal optimist and I continue to believe, even today, that we are at a unique moment in the history of Mishawaka. Our fundamentals are strong and we will not only survive the pandemic and any challenges that lay before us but we will succeed and indeed, thrive. I don't know about you, but there's no place I'd rather be and there's no one I'd rather share the journey with than you. May the Princess always look over your shoulder and may God continue to bless you, our citizens, our staff and our beloved City of Mishawaka.

Yours in Mishawaka,



SOUTH BEND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Beginning Monday, July 13, applications for the Indiana COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program will be accepted online at <https://www.indianahousingnow.org>. The program will provide up to \$500 in assistance for four months to eligible persons, totaling a maximum of \$2,000 to help cover past and ongoing rent payments or late fees.

To be eligible, renters must meet the following criteria, lost their job or part of their income due to COVID-19, current household income, including unemployment, is less than the household income on March 6, have not received rental assistance from another source.

Payments will be made directly to landlords and the landlord must agree to participate. Any renter facing financial hardship and unable to make their rent payment should speak to their property manager right away.